

## Host a *Join or Die* Film Watch Party

Invite 3-5 friends over to watch a powerful documentary about the importance of social and civic engagement and have a discussion afterward. (Watch the [film's trailer here](#). You can [rent the documentary here](#) for \$9.99.)

### This is the tactic for you if...

- You like to participate in discussions about things that impact your community
- You care about building relationships and community

### Why this tactic matters

Social connections are one of the keys to a functioning democracy. Without these connections, according to political scientist Robert Putnam,<sup>1</sup> our democracy falters. Gathering with a small group to watch a documentary on this topic and have a discussion could lead to new thinking and dreaming among your friends and inspire them to get more involved.

### What to do

#### 1. Choose the date and time for your event.

#### 2. Invite your friends.

A simple phone call, or a text message should suffice. Tell them why this film and discussion matters and what your hopes are for the event. If you want, invite people to bring a snack to share.

#### 3. [Register your event](#) with NETWORK.

Don't worry, we won't promote your event -- this just helps us track our impact.

#### 4. Prepare for your event.

Gather some refreshments. Make your space cozy and inviting. Rent the film and set it up on your TV.

#### 5. Host your event.

Pro-tip: If you can, take pictures or ask a guest to take pictures throughout your event.

##### a. **Guests gather and enjoy refreshments.**

##### b. **Welcome your guests and tell them why you're hosting this event.** Your personal sharing about why community matters to you helps to set the tone.

If your guests don't all know each other, have them introduce themselves. Include a fun question to allow them to get to know each other a little bit more deeply.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Putnam is most known for the book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. The film *Join or Die* looks at his lifetime of work in domestic and international political science research.

Gathering expert Priya Parker calls these “magical questions.” ([Click here](#) for some of Priya’s favorites.)

- c. **Show the film.**
- d. **Lead the discussion.** Here are some sample questions that might help start the discussion:
  - i. What most struck you about what you saw? What resonated with you? What surprised you?
  - ii. How have you seen this reflected in your own community?
  - iii. In what ways has the modern era made it harder to maintain in-person community groups?
  - iv. How might we go about rebuilding civic trust and social capital in our own local neighborhoods?
- e. **Closing.** As you close, thank your participants for joining in the conversation and reflect back any key insights you heard from them during the discussion. Also identify and name any next steps and assign tasks where relevant.

## 6. Report back to let us know how your event went.

Let us know what went well, how the support was, and what you might hope for in the future. This helps us to improve the support we’re able to provide you.

Send your pictures. Photos especially help us to promote your great work and inspire others to join you! Please let us know who is in the photo and if we have permission to use the photos in a future NETWORK publication or social media post.

7. **Follow up.** If you and your friends come up with some great ideas, schedule a time to continue the discussion about how you can make those ideas happen. If your friends want to do something but aren’t sure what, be sure to invite them to participate in next month’s #SquadGoal with you.

## NETWORK Support

NETWORK organizers are here to support you. If you have any questions or want to talk through any ideas or concerns you may have, reach out!

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